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ABSTRACT

Recommendations for increasing the visibility and support of vocational student organizations are presented in this seventh report of the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education. This Council, created by the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968, is composed of 21 persons with backgrounds in labor, management, and education, who advise the Commissioner of Education about the status of vocational education programs. Industrial involvement, relevance to educational needs, and the furthering of career education and vocational development are cited as reasons for developing the potential of a previously neglected national resource--vocational student organizations. (AG)

7th REPORT

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Vocational Student Organizations

National Advisory Council on Vocational Education

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November 15, 1972

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The National Advisory Council on Vocational Education was created by the Congress through the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968. It is composed of 21 persons, appointed by the President from diverse backgrounds in labor, management and education. It is charged by law to advise the Commissioner of Education concerning the operation of vocational education programs, make recommendations concerning such programs, and make annual reports to the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare for transmittal to Congress.

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

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LAWRENCE DAVENPORT
Chairman

CALVIN DELLEFIELD
Executive Director

November 15, 1972

Honorable Elliot Richardson
Secretary
Department of Health, Education
and Welfare
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The National Advisory Council on Vocational Education is pleased to submit as its Seventh Report recommendations for expanding the visibility and support of Vocational Student Organizations.

For many years, Vocational Student Organizations have typified the cooperation between education and the private sector which is being so urgently sought today. These student organizations have supplied their members with the incentives and guidance which we recognize now as essential to bringing relevance to education, and which we accept as an integral part of the emerging career education concept.

We believe that Vocational Student Organizations are a neglected resource which can make great contributions toward expanding the options available to our Nation's student body.

This report attempts to bring their story to the public, and solicit nationwide support for their efforts.

The Council is deeply appreciative of the cooperation of all the student organizations, along with their advocates both in and out of the education field, in assisting us with gathering the background for this report. We are indebted to Council Member Martha Bachman, who is also Chairman of the Delaware State Advisory Council on Vocational Education, for her excellent guidance in preparing the report.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Davenport

Lawrence Davenport
Chairman

Encl

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VOCATIONAL STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

There is across the land a crisis of confidence in our education system. The reason is clear: There is an increasing disparity between what society needs and what our educational institutions are producing. The public is deeply concerned, and their concern is rooted in reality.

Industry, still by far the principal source of opportunities, is changing very, very rapidly. Education is not. There is a torrent of talk about change. The press is full of announcements of exciting innovations in teaching technology. There thus is created the illusion of change in a sector of society that is painfully slow to adopt change.

Industry accepts change as a matter of absolute necessity. The inexorable competitive pressure of a free economy forces continuous innovation and its prompt, universal imitation.

American education is, on the other hand, uniquely insulated from change. Most of our institutions are deliberately exempt from any market discipline. There are some good logical and historical reasons for this, but they do not alter the consequences. American industry is absorbing change at an accelerating rate. Its manpower needs are changing in accommodation. But, these changing needs are not being met by institutions that are changing much more slowly.

Thus there is a growing gap between what industry needs and what education is producing.

Industry is beginning to recognize this. They know that the limiting factor on economic growth in the seventies and eighties will not be technology. Their laboratories are pouring out innovations faster than

they can be digested. Nor will a lack of capital limit economic growth. The limiting factor will be inaccurately and inadequately educated manpower.

Miseducated people are a problem to themselves and to industry, and a threat to the economic prosperity on which so many of our hopes as a nation depend.

It is much easier to identify the relevance gap than it is to prescribe a comprehensive solution. But one part of the solution is perfectly clear: There must be direct, daily involvement of industry in practically all phases of the educational enterprise.

One splendid, yet neglected, mechanism for industry involvement is already in place: our national vocational student organizations. They have existed among us for 45 years. They reach 1.5 million more young people every year -- year after year. Industry invests an estimated three million dollars a year to help pay their modest costs, but these contributions are even more important as a measure of the esteem American industry holds for this vital organization. But much more important, thousands of business, industry, labor and community representatives participate in the daily activities of these organizations. The value of the time they contribute is inestimable, but infinitely more valuable are the solid links between industry and our young people that are being built. These vocational youth organizations, whose membership is voluntary, are quietly doing more to close the relevance gap than any other movement on the educational scene.

Their out-reach is spreading across the whole spectrum of vocational concern.

DECA: IDSTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION CLUBS OF AMERICA for students taking marketing, merchandising and management courses in the secondary and post-secondary schools.

FBLA-PBL: FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA-PHI BETA LAMBDA is a national organization serving students preparing for careers in business.

FFA: FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA for students preparing for careers in ag production, processing, supply and service, ag mechanics, natural resources and environmental science, horticulture and forestry.

FHA: FUTURE HOMEMAKERS OF AMERICA for students enrolled in consumer homemaking and home economics related occupations courses in the secondary schools.

OEA: OFFICE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION for students enrolled in office education occupations in the secondary and post-secondary schools.

VICA: VOCATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CLUBS OF AMERICA for students taking trade, industrial, technical and health education courses in the secondary and post-secondary schools.

A new organization, designed to serve students in health occupations has been organized at the state level and will shortly seek a national charter.

And there will be others.

The work of these organizations is integral to career education. They are by no means a frivolous and optional extra-curricular activity. Students are <u>deeply</u> involved at every stage. The organizations provide an indispensable emphasis on career and civic awareness, social competence and leadership ability. Few who have witnessed the work of these organizations at first hand question their value as essential instruments in career education. Their activities are characterized by a contagious kind of zest and enthusiasm all too rare in educational endeavors.

Yet these vital organizations are often obliged to operate in an

atmosphere of grudging intolerance or kindly contempt. School principals too often consider their activities disruptive of more formal and fashionable educational processes.

The U. S. Office of Education gives little more than lip service to encourage vocational student organizations either nationally or regionally. They have been ignored in the guidelines for State Plans for Vocational Education.

State Chief School Officers offer little positive help and often deliberately deny vocational student organizations their right to participate in state, regional and national events.

Most school boards and chief school officers rarely recognize the work of vocational youth organizations as an integral functional part of the curriculum.

Classroom teachers, given little support from above, often understandably ignore the vast potential of vocational youth organizations.

As a result, the 1.5 million now being served falls far short of the potential nine million students currently enrolled in vocational education programs that these organizations could and should serve.

All this is wrong. We are in the process in America of freeing ourselves from some paralyzing myths about the educational process. One such myth, the one that thwarts the marvelous potential of vocational youth organizations, is the prehistoric notion that education is what happens in classrooms -- and nothing else.

We must free ourselves of that ancient superstition. We must provide -- at every level -- a welcoming climate in which these vital organizations can grow to their full height. They must be given every reinforcement.

WE, THEREFORE, RECOMMEND THAT:

1. The President of the United States continue to give visability to vocational student organizations, that he suggest appropriate legislation to the Congress, that he include in his budget support to establish, expand and extend these organizations throughout career education;
2. The Congress recognize vocational student organizations as integral to instructional programs in all areas of career education, and support them financially;
3. The U. S. Commissioner of Education provide support for vocational student organizations by:
   a. Drawing federal guidelines for future State Plans for Vocational Education which assure student organization programs an integral role in programs of instruction;
   b. Providing a guaranteed set-aside for student organizations in the U. S. Office of Education budget;
   c. Providing a number of staff positions to coordinate the activities of the various student organizations, to assure that their programs and activities are in harmony with national policies and objectives, and to assist in developing, expanding and promoting such organizations;
   d. Requiring teacher training institutions which receive federal funds to incorporate in their programs instruction in the methods, techniques and philosophy of student organizations;
4. The student organizations themselves must launch a massive campaign

with financial and professional assistance from the U. S. Office of Education, to take their story to every local district, every State Board, every teachers' group, every State Legislature, the U. S. Congress, and to the general public;

5. The nation's mass media join in this effort;

6. Schools make the student organizations' programs available before grade 10 so students who leave school before completing twelve years of high school may be exposed to their dynamic programs.

Respectfully submitted,

Lawrence Davenport

Lawrence Davenport, Chairman

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Members, National Advisory Council

Calvin Dellefield,
Executive Director

November 15, 1972

OTHER PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL:

- First Report - directed its comments and recommendations at the need for change in national attitudes towards vocational education
- Second Report- recommended that the Federal government make necessary policy changes in its approaches to funding, in the organization and role of the Office of Education, and in present and proposed manpower policies and legislation
- Third Report - challenged American education to deal with the needs of the disadvantaged and minorities who do not enjoy adequate educational opportunities
- Fourth Report- turned its attention to five unique problems of financing and planning vocational education programs
- Fifth Report - attacked the educational establishment for paying lip service only to career education concepts rather than implementing realistic programs
- Special Report- Employment Problems of the Vietnam Veteran, urged new efforts to meet the training and employment needs of returning veterans
- Sixth Report - Counseling and Guidance: A Call For Change, recommended improvement in counseling and guidance services, including greater attention to vocational and technical education.
- Proceedings of Joint Meetings with the State Advisory Councils on Vocational Education.
  - Cooperative Day of Planning I (no longer in print)
  - Cooperative Day of Planning II (May 1-2, 1970 - Washington, D.C.)
  - Cooperative Day of Planning III (November 6-7, 1970 - Washington, D.C.)
  - Cooperative Day of Planning IV (April 17-18, 1971 - San Antonio, Texas)
  - Cooperative Day of Planning V (November 12-13, 1971 - Washington, D.C.)
  - Cooperative Day of Planning VI (May 5-6, 1972 - Denver, Colorado)

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